

Facts About...



HIV/AIDS in Young People

SUMMARY: In King County there are about 170 HIV infected adolescents age 13-19 and 830 young adults age 20-24. Young men who have sex with men (MSM) are disproportionately affected compared to other youth and are at the greatest risk of HIV infection. Based upon the age at initial diagnosis with HIV, teenagers living with HIV or AIDS through 06/2002 were more likely to be female or acquire infection heterosexually compared to older youth age 20-29. A smaller proportion of HIV infections in teenagers were among MSM and MSM/IDU combined (63%) compared to persons age 20-24 years (75%) or age 25-29 years (82%). A recent study of young MSM age 23-29 conducted in six large US cities found that Seattle had the lowest prevalence of HIV (5%), with the highest rate (18%) observed in Dallas. However, the study found high levels of risky sexual behavior among young MSM in all cities.

STATUS AND TRENDS IN HIV/AIDS CASES:

- There were 4,963 King County residents living with HIV or AIDS and reported to Public Health-Seattle & King County as of 6/30/2002. At the time of first diagnosis of HIV infection, under 1% were less than 13 years old; 2% were age 13-19; 10% were 20-24; 20% were 25-29; 44% were 30-39, 19% were 40-49, and 5% were age 50 or older.
- Over two-thirds of HIV diagnoses among persons ages 13 to 24 are in males who had sex with other males (with or without injection drug use), 7% were injection drug users (without male-to-male sex), 10% had heterosexual risk, and 3% were infected from blood products received before screening began in 1985.

King County Residents by Age of First HIV Diagnosis, as of June 2002

	13-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years
	Percent	Total	Total
Sex			
Male	72%	85%	90%
Female	28%	15%	10%
Race/Ethnicity			
White	71%	69%	73%
African American	16%	15%	14%
Hispanic	9%	10%	9%
Asian/P.Islander	2%	3%	2%
Native American	2%	3%	2%
Exposure Category			
Male-male sex	48%	63%	72%
Injection drug (IDU)	10%	6%	5%
Male-male/IDU	16%	12%	11%
Heterosexual sex	13%	9%	7%
Transfusion / hemophilia	5%	2%	<1%
Undetermined/other	9%	8%	6%
Total Cases	101	491	995

POPULATION SIZES:

- The King County 2000 Census for ages 13-19 is 151,661; for ages 20-24 it is 116,597 persons.

- The estimated King County population of gay or bisexual males age 15-24 is 9,500 persons.

HIV PREVALENCE:

- Extrapolating from persons living with HIV infection, there are an estimated 170 King County residents age 13-19 with HIV infection, and 830 who are age 20-24 living with HIV or AIDS.
- Therefore an estimated 0.1% of teens age 13-19, and 0.7% of young adults age 20-24 are infected with HIV. This dramatic 7-fold increased risk among young adults compared with teens demonstrates the importance of prevention during the years they become sexually active.
- Anonymous HIV prevalence (percent of people currently infected with HIV) surveys have been conducted in several specific populations in King County. These surveys and other data sources all have unique features, and results cannot be extrapolated to the general population. Data are summarized below:

Source of data, year(s)	Age (yrs.)	HIV+ / No. tested	% HIV+
AIDS Prevention Program, 1996-2000	<20	27/1122	2.4
AIDS Prevention Program, 1996-2000	20-24	282/4413	6.4
STD Clinic, 1996-99	<20	0/483	0.0
STD Clinic, 1996-99	20-29	14/2783	0.5
Drug Treatment Centers, selected facilities 1997-99	<25	2/127	1.6
Drug Treatment Centers, selected facilities 1997-99	25-29	2/235	0.9
Youth Clinic Survey, 1993	<25	2/138	1.45
Adolescent Clinic Survey, 1993-94	13-22	2/628	0.32
Childbearing Women Survey, 1989-94	<20	7/8,708	0.08
Young Men's Survey, 1997-98	15-18	0/85	0.0
Young Men's Survey, 1997-98	19-22	5/201	2.5
Young Men's Survey, 1998-2000	23-29	22/462	4.7
Job Corps, 1993-97 (Seattle MSA)*	16-24	2/2,180	0.09
Military recruits, 1985-98 (Seattle MSA)*	<20	1/19,364	0.01
Military recruits, 1985-98 (Seattle MSA)*	20-24	8/10,728	0.07

* The Seattle MSA includes King, Snohomish and Island counties

- HIV prevalence among MSM 23-29 years of age was estimated by the Young Men's Survey conducted in six US cities in 1998-00. Prevalence ranged from a low of 5% in Seattle to a high of 18% in Dallas.

RISK BEHAVIORS IN YOUNG GAY MALES:

- Results from the Seattle-area Young Men's Survey in 1997-98 showed that of those MSM ages 15-18 who had had anal sex in the past six months, 53% had had sex without a condom compared to 64% of 19-22 year olds. Of those ages 23-29 years who had had anal sex in the past six months, 62% had had unprotected anal sex (with 42% "sometimes" and 20% "never" using a condom during sex).

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION FOR HIV PREVENTION:

- Diagnosis of a sexually transmitted disease indicates unsafe sexual behavior, and the presence of an STD increases the risk of acquiring HIV. Young people continue to have the highest rates of STDs. In King County, the 2000 chlamydia and gonorrhea rates were 1733 and 218 per 100,000, respectively, for 18-19 year olds compared to 246 and 133 per 100,000 for 30-34 year olds.
- Results from risk behavior surveys provide important information about behaviors that may place young people at risk for HIV infection. The Seattle Public Schools 1999 Teen Health Risk Survey showed that 40% of high school students had had sex. Of those reporting sex in the previous three months, 61% had had sex without a condom at least once during that time.
- According to the Seattle Public Schools 1999 Teen Health Risk Survey, 1% of high school students said they were homosexual, 3% bisexual, 90% heterosexual, and 6% said they were unsure.